

Rostelecom, Trying to Obey Law, Blocks Yandex

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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State-controlled telecom company Rostelecom blocked Russia's most popular search engine, the New York-traded Yandex, for 23 minutes this week in an apparent mistake.

Rostelecom was trying to implement a ruling by the Maykop City Court in the Adygeya republic to block the IP addresses of more than 100 websites containing information on illegal drugs, news reports said Wednesday.

But instead, the company blocked access to all of Yandex for 23 minutes on Tuesday afternoon.

Having discovered the "system flaw," Rostelecom took action and restored access to Yandex, a representative of the telecommunications company told Interfax.

A law that took effect Nov. 1 gives regulators the authority to block access to content

considered "hazardous to the health and development" of children by "promoting" drugs and suicide.

Critics say the law is imperfect because it can block not only the sites with illegal information but also bona fide resources linked to the same IP address.

Yandex said the situation was a "misunderstanding" and that an official request for clarification had been sent to Rostelecom.

When Yandex filed for its IPO in 2011, it listed interference from the Russian government as among the risks of investing in its stock.

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